

In re: Gebreselassie et al.
Serial No.: 10/726,391
Filed: December 3, 2003
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In the Claims:

1-42 (Cancelled).

43. (Currently Amended) A method of installing a vehicle cockpit assembly within a passenger compartment of a vehicle, wherein the passenger compartment is separated from an engine compartment by a firewall, wherein the passenger compartment comprises a floor, the method comprising:

providing a dash insulator of thermoformable material that is configured to be attached to the vehicle firewall;

movably attaching an instrument panel to a first edge portion of the dash insulator via adhesive, wherein the adhesive serves as a hinge that allows the instrument panel and dash insulator to move relative to each other to facilitate installation of the cockpit assembly within the vehicle passenger compartment;

ascertaining acoustic properties of the vehicle to identify portions of the dash insulator requiring sound reflection and/or absorption;

applying sound reflection and/or absorption material to identified portions of the dash insulator; and

installing the attached dash insulator and instrument panel within a vehicle as a single cockpit assembly.

44. (Original) The method of Claim 43, wherein applying sound reflection and/or absorption material to identified portions of the dash insulator comprises spraying polyurethane to one or more portions of the dash insulator.

45. (Original) The method of Claim 44, wherein spraying polyurethane comprises spraying polyurethane with different thicknesses to one or more portions of the dash insulator.

46. (Original) The method of Claim 43, wherein ascertaining acoustic properties of the vehicle comprises identifying areas of the dash insulator at which sound

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within a predetermined frequency range is directed at an intensity level that exceeds a threshold intensity level.

47. (Original) The method of Claim 46, wherein ascertaining acoustic properties of the vehicle comprises generating a sound intensity map of the vehicle.

48. (Cancelled)

49. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 43, further comprising attaching a floor covering to the dash insulator prior to installing the attached dash insulator and instrument panel within the vehicle.

50. (Currently Amended) A method of installing a vehicle cockpit assembly within a passenger compartment of a vehicle, wherein the passenger compartment is separated from an engine compartment by a firewall, wherein the passenger compartment comprises a floor, the method comprising:

providing a dash insulator of thermoformable material that is configured to be attached to the vehicle firewall;

attaching an instrument panel to a first edge portion of the dash insulator;

ascertaining acoustic properties of the vehicle to identify portions of the dash insulator requiring sound reflection and/or absorption;

applying sound reflection and/or absorption material to identified portions of the dash insulator;

~~movably~~ attaching a floor covering to a second edge portion of the dash insulator via adhesive, wherein the adhesive serves as a hinge that allows the floor covering and dash insulator to move relative to each other to facilitate installation of the cockpit assembly within the vehicle passenger compartment; and

installing the attached dash insulator, floor covering and instrument panel within a vehicle as a single cockpit assembly.

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51. (Currently Amended) A method of installing a vehicle cockpit assembly within a passenger compartment of a vehicle, wherein the passenger compartment is separated from an engine compartment by a firewall, and wherein the passenger compartment comprises a floor, the method comprising:

providing a dash insulator of thermoformable material that is configured to be attached to the vehicle firewall, and that includes an upper substrate having opposite first and second surfaces and opposite first and second edge portions, a lower substrate having opposite third and fourth surfaces and opposite third and fourth edge portions, wherein the upper and lower substrates are configured to be joined together along the respective second and third edge portions;

attaching an instrument panel to the upper substrate first edge portion via adhesive to form a first cockpit assembly portion;

attaching a floor covering to the lower substrate fourth edge portion via adhesive to form a second cockpit assembly portion;

installing the first and second cockpit assembly portions within a vehicle such that the first and second substrates are attached to the firewall; and

joining the upper and lower substrates together along the second and third edge portions thereof.

52. (Original) The method of Claim 51, wherein the following steps are performed prior to the attaching step:

ascertaining acoustic properties of the vehicle to identify portions of the dash insulator requiring sound reflection and/or absorption; and

applying sound reflection and/or absorption material to identified portions of the dash insulator.

53. (Original) The method of Claim 52, wherein the step of applying sound reflection and/or absorption material to identified portions of the dash insulator comprises spraying polyurethane to one or more portions of the upper and/or lower substrates.

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54. (Original) The method of Claim 53, wherein spraying polyurethane comprises spraying polyurethane with different thicknesses to one or more portions of the upper and/or lower substrates.

55. (Original) The method of Claim 52, wherein ascertaining acoustic properties of the vehicle comprises identifying areas of the dash insulator at which sound within a predetermined frequency range is directed at an intensity level that exceeds a threshold intensity level.

56. (Original) The method of Claim 55, wherein ascertaining acoustic properties of the vehicle comprises generating a sound intensity map of the vehicle.

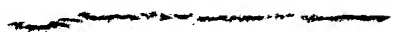
57. (Original) The method of Claim 51, wherein attaching an instrument panel to the upper substrate first edge portion comprises movably attaching the instrument panel to the upper substrate first edge portion.

58. (Original) The method of Claim 51, wherein attaching a floor covering to the lower substrate fourth edge portion comprises movably attaching the floor covering to the lower substrate fourth edge portion.

59-64 (Cancelled)

65. (Currently Amended) A method of installing a vehicle cockpit assembly within a passenger compartment of a vehicle, wherein the passenger compartment is separated from an engine compartment by a firewall, wherein the passenger compartment comprises a floor, the method comprising:

providing a dash insulator of thermoformable material that is configured to be attached to the vehicle firewall;



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movably attaching an instrument panel to the dash insulator via adhesive, wherein the adhesive serves as a hinge that allows the instrument panel and dash insulator to move relative to each other to facilitate installation of the cockpit assembly within the vehicle passenger compartment;

movably attaching a floor covering to the dash insulator via adhesive, wherein the adhesive serves as a hinge that allows the floor covering and dash insulator to move relative to each other to facilitate installation of the cockpit assembly within the vehicle passenger compartment;

ascertaining acoustic properties of the vehicle to identify portions of the dash insulator requiring sound reflection and/or absorption;

applying sound reflection and/or absorption material to identified portions of the dash insulator; and

installing the attached dash insulator, instrument panel and floor covering within a vehicle as a single cockpit assembly.

66. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 65, wherein applying sound reflection and/or absorption material to identified portions of the dash insulator comprises spraying polyurethane to one or more portions of the dash insulator.

67. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 66, wherein spraying polyurethane comprises spraying polyurethane with different thicknesses to one or more portions of the dash insulator.

68. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 65, wherein ascertaining acoustic properties of the vehicle comprises identifying areas of the dash insulator at which sound within a predetermined frequency range is directed at an intensity level that exceeds a threshold intensity level.

69. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 65, wherein ascertaining acoustic properties of the vehicle comprises generating a sound intensity map of the vehicle.